



**Advisory Group Meeting**

**Tuesday, March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

**6:30 – 8:30 pm**

**Mansfield Community Center, Community Room**

**Special Meeting**

**Minutes**

**Advisory Group Members Present:** Sara Anderson, Human Services Advisory Committee; Mark LaPlaca, Mansfield Board of Ed; John McGuire, Economic Development Commission; Toni Moran Deputy Mayor and Downtown Partnership; Nancy Tinker, Eastern CT State University; Al Cyr, Mansfield Agriculture Committee; Derek Rudd, Resident; Quentin Kessel, Conservation Commission; George Rawitscher, Resident; Winky Gordon, Resident; Tom Callahan, UConn; Meg Reich, Willimantic River Alliance; Susan Zito, Mansfield Resident; Michael Daniels, UConn Student Representative; Jeff Polhemus, Eastern Highlands Health District; Matthew Emery, Storrs Congregational Church; James Morrow, Open Space Preservation Committee; Sarah Accorsi, Zoning Board of Appeals; and Kevin Roberto, Vinton PTO. **Project Staff Present:** Larissa Brown, Goody Clancy; Linda Painter, Mansfield Director of Planning and Development; Jennifer Kaufman, Mansfield Tomorrow Project Manager; and Kelsey Sullivan, Mansfield Tomorrow Intern. **Guest Present:** Betty Wassmundt and Mirium Kurland.

1. The Meeting was Called to Order at 6:30pm
2. Jennifer Kaufman welcomed the attendees and gave background information on the Mansfield Tomorrow project
  - attendees were encouraged to spread the word to other town residents
  - attendees went around the room, introducing themselves and their group affiliation if they had one
  - Amy Kohn from Goody Clancy had prepared minutes from last month's meeting, there were no objections to the minutes and so they were accepted by the group
3. Larissa Brown: "Old Business"
  - A tentative first meeting schedule was proposed as the first Tuesday of the month from now through June 4<sup>th</sup>

- The second Tuesday of the month seemed more preferable for the group, although one member cannot make it and so the final meeting schedule has yet to be decided, Larissa will be following up with this
- Reviewed the three major components of Mansfield Tomorrow:
  - The process itself, initiating a dialogue about development visions for Mansfield
  - Creating an updated POCD
  - Supporting the new POCD with new land-use and subdivision policies
- Reviewed major themes of the January 30<sup>th</sup> Kick-Off event (the summary report is available on the Mansfield Tomorrow website)
- Provided a brief summary of Yellow Wood's Agricultural Forum on February 2<sup>nd</sup>, this report is also available on the website
- 4. Larissa Reviews Draft Agenda for this Saturday's event (Community Forum)
  - Attendees will participate in visioning exercises
    - Will be asked for personal visions
    - Will be asked to appraise the Vision Statements from the Mansfield 2020 plan
  - Workshop will also review development areas, as outlined in the 2006 POCD
    - Attendees will be broken up for small group discussion
- 5. Larissa presents town status in regard to housing, transportation, and economy:
  - Housing
    - Roughly 50% of residents live in "households"
    - A large demographic is aging affluent baby-boomers, a generational transition will be taking place over next 20 years
    - Mansfield's big building boom took place between 1950- 1980
  - Transportation
    - A large portion of residents – 82.4% - have two or more vehicles
    - 1.2% have no vehicles
      - there was a discussion about this unusually high percentage, it was speculated that this number may reflect graduate students who walk to their jobs on campus
  - Economy
    - The town's economic well-being is very dependent on UConn
    - Of jobs located in Mansfield, 56.2% of wages and salaries are in state government
    - Mansfield is displaying better economic performance and unemployment rates than surrounding areas
    - The town government is very dependent on state aid
    - Mansfield has a below-average percentage of taxable commercial/industrial property

- There was a discussion about the fact that the Mansfield 2020 plan was crafted before the economy crashed in late 2008, some of its goals or visions may no longer be viable
  - Agricultural enterprises
    - There are 38 farms located in Mansfield
    - However, only 5 farms have farming as their primary occupation
- 6. Larissa reviewed concerns that the consulting team has heard about development thus far
  - Residents are concerned about UConn's various expansion plans
  - Members proposed that one issue to be addressed is the potential loss of state funding and how the town would cope
  - Members also proposed that the issue about schools should be touched upon (how to deal with rising costs and keeping facilities up-to-date)
    - Larissa explained that this issue will likely be addressed in the Mansfield Tomorrow process, although the extremely technical details may be left out, as they may be lost on the general public
    - School issues may be addressed within the new POCD or be a part of the discussion in the Economic Development or Housing focus groups
- 7. Larissa reviews the 2006 POCD
  - On Saturday there will be presentation and interactive activities conducted by other consultants (Farr Associates and PlaceMatters) to solicit feedback about development preferences
  - Members discussed what UConn's plans are for currently unused properties such as the Depot Campus and the Bergin Prison
    - These plan will ultimately affect the town
    - UConn representative Tom Callahan explained that plans for development exist, but the process is complicated because the site has decayed infrastructure and has been listed under National Register of Historic Places
- 8. Larissa asked for closing comments
- 9. Meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm